

Cuban Artist Seeks to Redefine What Is To Be a Revolutionary

She hopes to redefine the concept of revolutionary



SARAH MORENO

SMORENO@ELNUEVOHERALD.COM

Tania Bruguera belongs to that group of Cuban artists who do not want to get involved in politics. She believes it is necessary to take the street and get the people involved so as to make them question reality. She did it in 2009 in the Havana Biennial with the performance *Tatlin's Whisper*, where she invited people to say their thoughts, even if these were against the government.

Tania Bruguera TOM MARTIN/WALES NEWS SERVICE / WALES NEWS SERVICE

“It was a moment of much tension. You could cut the air with a knife. For me, it was an exercise on how the future would be in the present, so people would begin to practice to say what they think,” Bruguera remembers from this event that put the governmental authorities on their guard on future art performances in the island.

With the same intention of giving rise to a collective dialogue, on Tuesday 18th Bruguera will present in Key West a performance to “reopen the Cuban Revolutionary Party,” an idea she has also conceived as a tribute to the founder of the party, Jose Marti, 120 years after he launched the PRC’s bases at the San Carlos Institute.

“I want to start a collective conversation on what being revolutionary is, because many changes are taking place in Cuba. The government has restricted the right to define what being a revolutionary is. And all those who do something that goes against that definition, turns into a counterrevolutionary,” Bruguera said from New York in an interview with *The New Herald*.

The multidisciplinary 44 year old artist considers that the island is living a moment of transition and crisis in which “what Cuba may become is being defined, and we all can contribute to it.”

The performance will begin at noon in La Concha Hotel, Duval Street, and continue with a tour of the San Carlos Institute and a visit to historical sites related with Marti in Key West. Bruguera will also offer a press conference to talk about the project of reopening the PRC.

“It is important for every Cubans to see they can do things,” Bruguera observed and specified that she herself will take part in the project like any other citizen.

“I am not from the CIA or from Security [the repressive intelligence apparatus of the Cuban regime] and I have not accepted money from anyone,” Bruguera clarified. When asked about her place of residence, she answered: “I live in Paris where I offer classes at the National Fine Arts School; I have a lengthy art project in Corona, Queens, and my home is in Havana.”

“This performance plays with the political imaginary. If people are interested in the idea, it may become a reality. If nobody wants to join, it will be a symbolic call,” said Bruguera, who has just arrived from a meeting in the United Nations in which she represented artists with a political awareness defending freedom of expression.

“An artist is an active citizen with an interest in having a critical conversation,” she affirmed, sure that reopening the PRC may be “an uncomfortable project, especially in Cuba, where the present Constitution clearly says there is only one party.”

http://www.elnuevoherald.com/2012/12/18/1366528_artista-cubana-busca-redefinir.html#storylink=addthis